

# Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

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## How Will Youth Influence the Future of Germany?

Moderator, **GEORGE V. DENNY, Jr.**

### Speakers

**WALDEMAR VON KNOERINGEN**  
**PETER D. PROPP**

**ALONZO G. GRACE**  
**MELVIN LASKY**

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### COMING

— August 2, 1949 —

**How Can Austria Survive as an Individual  
Democratic Nation?**

— August 9, 1949 —

**What Does Democracy Mean to Italy?**

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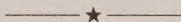
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## THE BROADCAST OF AUGUST 2:

### "How Can Austria Survive as an Individual Democratic Nation?"



## THE BROADCAST OF AUGUST 9:

### "What Does Democracy Mean to Italy?"



The Broadcast of July 26, 1949, over the American Broadcasting Company Network from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m., was a rebroadcast of the program which originated in the Cecilia Auditorium, Berlin, Germany, on July 12, 1949.



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# Town Meeting

BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

GEORGE V. DENNY, JR., MODERATOR



JULY 26, 1949

VOL. 15, No. 13

## How Will Youth Influence the Future of Germany?

**Mr. Kvam:**

This is Roger Kvam of Rochester, Minnesota, Youth Member of the Town Hall World Seminar, speaking to you from Berlin, Germany.

Our party flew into Berlin last Friday in General Clay's former plane via the air lift. We were immediately fascinated by the vastness, yet efficiency, of "Operation Vittles." At Tempelhof Air-Base, huge cargo planes kept rolling in and were unloaded and refueled in a matter of minutes.

When we left Tempelhof, we saw the gutted and naked city which had once been the pride of Germany. Mountains of rubble and empty shells of buildings, like ghosts in the twilight, haunted our slow journey through the almost empty streets. Among those devastated ruins, small groups of little children played and laughed. We wondered. Would they build back this strange devastated city? Would they grow up to make a world of peace or war? Those youth constitute a tremendous problem to Germany—and that problem we are about to discuss on our Town Meeting tonight.

And now to preside over our discussion, here is your moderator, the president of Town Hall and founder of America's Town Meeting of the Air—Mr. George V. Denny, Jr. Mr. Denny.

**Moderator Denny:**

*Guten Abend, Nachbarn.* Good evening, neighbors. Tonight we invite you to join us behind the Iron Curtain, where we're the guests of the Free University of Berlin and the German Institute for Political Science. We are meeting in the Cecilia Auditorium

Illinois Library



in the British sector of Berlin, where the torch of freedom is being held aloft over the greater part of this devastated city by Prof Ernst Reuter, its wise and courageous mayor.

As our situation here is so completely different from the conditions under which most of our broadcasts take place, we must devote some of our time to a description of these conditions. And we're fortunate to be able to begin with the mayor, himself, one of the best-known figures in postwar Germany, Dr. Ernst Reuter, *Bürgermeister* of Berlin. Mayor Reuter. (*Applause*)

### **Mayor Reuter:**

We Berliners are very thankful to have this opportunity through the Town Hall Meeting of the Air, to speak directly to our friends all over the world. We are especially glad for the opportunity to talk to our friends in the United States.

In a very true sense, the fate of this City of Berlin—the only free city behind the Iron Curtain—is absolutely dependent on whether or not Berlin's precarious situation is understood by public opinion in all of the free, peace-loving countries of the world.

From day to day, our lives depend on the great struggle between freedom and slavery which is going on not only in our own country but throughout the whole world. Here, even the minor details of our daily lives give a very clear picture of the greater issues of world policy. For that reason, in this always open-minded and freedom-seeking old capital of Germany, the population has to be politically cautious and mentally alert.

Freedom and peace are for us not mere slogans to be used on solemn occasions. Freedom and peace are the real goals we are seeking. We are making this search with a resolution which springs from our deepest convictions and from the bottom of our hearts.

We greet our friends—you, the representatives of many leading American organizations who have come over here to stay a few days with us and to learn something of the special atmosphere of this city. And we extend our greeting to all listeners to this Town Meeting of the Air, hoping that the struggle for a common cause will bring our people closer and closer together. (*Applause*)

### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Mayor Reuter.

Our subject this evening is, "How Will Youth Influence the Future of Germany?" And although we have four experts here to counsel with us on this important subject, we believe you'll be interested, first, in a description of the present situation b

our young people who are trying to decide for themselves just what part they expect to play in making Germany's future.

We're going to start with this very courageous young man, who risked arrest and imprisonment a short time ago by going to the defense of half a dozen Berlin boys and girls who had been arrested by the Communist police for distributing Western democracy newspapers in the Soviet zone.

Heinz Westphal, you appear to have cast your lot with the forces working for freedom and democracy here in Germany. How old are you, Heinz?

**Heinz:**

I am twenty-five years old.

**Moderator Denny:**

Now, without enumerating all the problems you young people face here but just mentioning two that are obvious to all of us—the destruction of about half of your city and the ever-present struggle between the forces of freedom and the force of totalitarianism, to which our Mayor referred—what do you think German youth can do toward the reconstruction of Germany?

**Heinz:**

We shall only have a democratic Germany if each of us cooperates in reconstruction. Especially, the young people must not stay aloof from political affairs. They have to learn the ways and means of democracy and to use them in our Parliament to create new laws. Above all, we have to be the protectors of good citizenship and always press for progress and social justice.

**Moderator Denny:**

Social justice is a good word, Heinz. How can we be sure—we, in America—that German youth won't follow another Hitler?

**Heinz:**

Give German youth a chance to have a real democracy and give them responsibility. Then we can prove that we want to build up a peaceful state and that it is not our wish to bring war and misery into the world again.

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Heinz Westphal. (*Applause*)

Now, Karin Mattenklott. By the way, Karin, do you have any objection to my asking your age?

**Karin:**

No, of course not, because I am only twenty years old!

**Moderator Denny:**

Do you live here in Berlin?

**Karin:**

Yes, I do.

**Moderator Denny:**

And what are you doing?

**Karin:**

I'm studying at the Free University.

**Moderator Denny:**

Now, what do you think that the German girls think of the problems they're facing?

**Karin:**

Well, I think that the German women should become far more interested in politics than they are now. In consequence of the war, our male population has been strongly decimated, and so the women make about two-thirds of the German voters, and forty per cent of our students are women. Therefore, I think that a political misjudgment on the part of the women might become very dangerous for our future.

**Moderator Denny:**

Well, Karin, do you think there is any danger of German youth following another Hitler?

**Karin:**

Well, I think there are very strong nationalistic and militaristic tendencies among the young people, especially in the Western zone. And I think that their will to build up a new German state must not lead to a false nationalism that might endanger the understanding between the nations.

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Karin Mattenklott.

Now here is Mr. Wolfram Kruss from Berlin. How old are you, Mr. Kruss?

**Mr. Kruss:**

Twenty-four years.

**Moderator Denny:**

What is your occupation?



**Mr. Kruss:**

I am a teacher.

**Moderator Denny:**

I understand, Mr. Kruss, that you are not a member of a youth organization. Will you tell us why not?

**Mr. Kruss:**

My coöperation with the regime—the early regime—has not exactly acted as an encouragement for me to participate further in political activities. The difficult economic conditions under which we are living now are not an obstacle to my participation in active political life. But, to speak very frankly, I don't think that the example which is set to us is really very encouraging. To be absolutely frank, I think there is much too much talk and not enough action.

**Moderator Denny:**

We are familiar with that expression, Mr. Kruss. The Indians say, "Too much talk, not enough do." Well, now you're speaking to about ten million American people tonight, who, in the last analysis, determine our foreign policy here and everywhere around the world. How do you think we can best help German youth to help themselves?

**Mr. Kruss:**

If some kind of initiative and responsibility were given to the German youth, then, no doubt, they could coöperate usefully with the general work. Then there would be a possibility of a change in the economic life of the nation. However, I'm asking myself whether the dismantling of some plant which could be used as a school for technicians is really the right way to go ahead with such a program. (*Applause*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Well, thank you, Mr. Kruss, for your frank answer. Now we have a young man here who lived for two and a half years in a Russian concentration camp in Buchenwald. For obvious reasons, I am not mentioning his name, but we'll just call him Guenther. Well, Guenther, what do the youth in the Soviet zone think about the questions we've been asking here tonight?

**Guenther:**

The youth in the East zone wait for their liberation, and the youth cannot understand that the Americans are willing to take much from the Russians.

**Moderator Denny:**

But what about the Communist youth organizations there, Guenther?

**Guenther:**

It is true that about five hundred thousand young people have entered the Communist organizations in eastern Germany. However, you must never forget that these young people live under the most fearful oppression. It's exactly what happened under Hitler. Today there are more than a thousand in Russian concentration camps, and it is extremely difficult for the young people there to resist such pressure. Therefore, they do exactly what they did under Hitler. They just go along. (*Applause*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you very much, Guenther. Well, we could go on like this for many hours, but I think we're ready for the advice from our experts, Dr. Alonzo Grace, Director of Education, Cultural Relations Division of OMGUS; Waldemar von Knoeringen, Member of the Bavarian Parliament in Munich; and two young people, Melvin Lasky, an American editor of the literary magazine *Die Welt im Monat*, and Peter D. Propp, student of economics at the Free University in Berlin, who is to be an exchange student next year at Union College in Schenectady, New York.

Dr. Grace, as the former Commissioner of Education for the State of Connecticut and as the American official principally responsible for the American program to help German youth help themselves, will you be the first to tell us how you think youth will influence the future of Germany? Dr. Alonzo G. Grace:

**Dr. Grace:**

Mr. Denny, the youth of Germany are neither optimists nor pessimists, but among them are many who are skeptics about anything that appears to be a governmental effort to control their destinies. These youth here tonight reflect the views of thousands of German youth.

While this audience is fully aware of the Hitler youth movement, I know the American audience will be interested to know that the entire youth of Germany were required to receive their training in the Hitler Youth Organization for National Service and in the spirit of Nazism. Thus the physical, the moral, and the mental training of youth—10 to 18 years of age—was completely controlled by the party. Few youth under 25 years of age today escaped the Hitler Youth Organization, and Nazi teaching has



most numbers of disillusioned young people without goals or a means of generating more positive ideals and programs.

Mr. Lasky, I presume, will agree with me that the youth of Norway, Holland, Denmark, England, France, and other countries have suffered the devastating effects of war and fully comprehend the meaning of totalitarianism and concentration camps. These youth today reveal bitterness, but tolerance. There is an honest desire in many cases to forgive, but there is also evidence that they will not soon forget. Youth from these other countries, as well as from Germany, are concerned that there be constructed a society based on law and order, humanity, social justice, and peace.

Will German youth take the initiative in preventing the return of a nationalistic element? Will youth reject personal responsibility for those programs that affect their own destinies? Do they await some new leader to solve their problems, and will they see that what happened yesterday will not reoccur tomorrow? I know Peter Propp can tell you something of this struggle at the present time.

There are many examples of what youth is doing in Germany. For example, the voluntary youth organizations, formed way back in 1896 on a democratic basis in Germany, have been reformed. No one has to belong, but about 25 per cent of the young people between 10 and 25 years of age now belong to one or more organizations, and in 266 *Kreise*, committees of citizens discuss youth policies and programs. Our need is to develop programs with youth and not for youth.

The Free University of Berlin is ample evidence of the courage of youth and the desire for the freedom to learn, the freedom to teach, and the freedom to lead. Over four thousand German youth with their own leadership, aided by thirty youth leaders from other countries and the United States, have been trained in five leadership training schools. The *Studenten Haus* at Aachen, with financial aid from the ministry, has been completely restored by youth, and there are a hundred other such projects in Germany. I am sure Mr. von Knoeringen will agree that the exchange of students among nations is important. We must all agree that this exchange must be extended not only to university students, but to youth and labor in religious organizations, education, and other youth organizations.

Given time and the proper leadership, German youth, in spite of the Hitler era, are ready, willing, and eager to join with the youth of the rest of the world and the free, voluntary, uncontrolled youth organizations of other nations in the development of a

peaceful society. Yes, Mr. Denny, the job will be done by German youth, but not over night. (*Applause*)

### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Dr. Grace.

Now we are to hear from a man who has been active in underground work against Nazism ever since Hitler came to power. He fled to Czechoslovakia in 1934, and maintained his fight against totalitarianism from whatever vantage point he could attain during the years preceding and through World War II. In April, 1946, the Bavarian Minister requested him to return to Germany to take part in reëducational activities. Now he's a member of the Bavarian legislature and is deeply interested in tonight's question.

We are happy to welcome to Town Meeting Mr. Waldemar von Knoeringen. Mr. von Knoeringen.

### **Mr. von Knoeringen:**

I am sorry to say that not every American thinks like Dr. Grace. The other day an American visitor made the following remark to me: "German youth have no interest in politics. They are outside political life because they have not yet given up Nazism."

I feel certain that this statement is wrong. Of course, it's only a small section whose interest in political problems is awakened. The great majority still keeps aloof. However, we have to do justice to our young people and not just call them nationalistic or militaristic. One must consider the great difficulties they have to overcome in their effort to create an economic basis of the future.

At the University of Munich, where I come from, seventy per cent of the students have to earn their own money. Forty-five per cent of their living quarters are declared unsuitable. One hundred fifty thousand young people in Bavaria want to get vocational training, but there are only 23,000 vacancies for apprentices.

It seems to me that there is one outstanding aspect of our German youth problem. It answers, to some extent, the question before our meeting when I say that the young generation of Germany has not yet decided what road to take. Skeptical, realistic and undecided—this is the present attitude of the great majority of German youth. The question remains, "Where will they decide to go?" No party can answer this question with certainty today.

As an active member of a democratic political party, I know the difficulties in approaching our young people. None of the political parties, religious, or other youth organizations can, as yet, report anything but minor results. I think this also goes for the activities Dr. Grace referred to in his speech.

From my personal experience, I can say this. There is but one way to the mind and heart of our German youth. To convince them by facts, they must be shown by an honest effort that democracy can produce a sound political system of self-government, can offer social security that makes it possible to plan one's future, can organize economic recovery in the exchange of ideas with other people of the world. For instance, an effective housing program or a large scale exchange of workers or students with other countries, as Dr. Grace mentioned, would be convincing argument.

My point is this. If we, the acting democrats of today, fail in this effort, then disappointment and despair will cause new radicalism and even nationalism which will help those forces whose aim it is to set up a new dictatorship under Eastern influences. Therefore, it is essential that those elements of German democracy who are struggling so hard to keep the ideal of freedom alive should not be let down by the democracies of the Western world.

German youth will help in rebuilding a new and better Europe if they will be convinced that our ideals are not only sound, but practical. And that means, first of all, to create social democracy in Germany. (*Applause*)

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Mr. von Knoeringen.

Our next speaker, Melvin Lasky, was born in New York City in 1920. He began his literary career with a weekly paper called the *New Leader*. He served overseas with our armed forces from 1943 to 1946 and remained in Europe after the war as a foreign correspondent. He's now editor of a German language literary magazine *Der Monat*, which is published here in Berlin and distributed in other countries of Western Europe. We are happy to welcome to Town Meeting Mr. Melvin Lasky. Mr. Lasky.

#### **Mr. Lasky:**

If, as Waldemar von Knoeringen has said, it is regrettable that not all Americans talk like Dr. Grace, then it's certainly even more regrettable that not all Germans talk like Herr von Knoeringen.

I quite agree with both these gentlemen that if enough intelligence, enough vigor, enough imagination are placed behind the move to win young Germans to a democratic way of life, they can be won over. They can be taught to think clearly, simply, soberly, without hatred and emotional prejudices.

They can become good and useful citizens of both Germany



and Europe if society provides them with adequate education, gives them jobs and careers, and normalizes the broken-up family life. They may now be cynical and confused and naïve, but their minds are not closed, and they can be shown if concrete democratic gains are achieved.

Their new Parliament in Bonn must not become a chattering debating society. The standard of living must be raised. Cities must be rebuilt. The rights and privileges of the individual citizen must be respected. Young Germans must come to feel that they are part of a genuinely free and prosperous community.

It is most important to realize that youth by themselves don't shape any future. The future shapes them. By themselves, they won't save the world and they won't destroy it. Youth never does. They're molded, formed, and developed by the adult world in which they grow up.

And among the adult groups in Germany who have influence on the youth, there are, unfortunately, not only enlightened democrats and anti-Nazis—like Von Knoeringen and Ernst Reuter—there are also important extremist groups on the right and on the left. There are the Germany First Nationalists, powerful in the West, and the Russia First Communists, powerful in the East.

In the West, in fact, in Herr von Knoeringen's own bailiwick of Bavaria, there are outspoken leaders trying to win the youth to a new kind of racial prejudice. There are other voices preaching, not Nazism, but a doctrine which insists that not everything was evil in Hitlerism. There are groups who are not interested in building schools and improving the universities, but who seek to enrage the youth with vague propaganda-loaded slogans about the maliciousness of all foreigners, whether Americans, or French or D. P.'s or British. Can the German youth, despite these groups find their way to the democratic ideal of Germany working peaceably with her neighbors in a united Western Europe?

Here in the East, the issues are even more desperate. We are in the city of Berlin, surrounded on all sides by the Soviet dominated zone of Germany, where 20 million Germans live under a totalitarian regime of the German Communist party plus the Soviet secret police. Not 50 miles from here are the notorious concentration camps of Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen. Here the young kids in the schools write weekly essays on "What the Two-Year Plan Means to Me" and "How Best To Fight Against American Imperialism."

There is a monopolistic youth organization, the F. D. G., which has more than a half-million members marching in bright blue shirts and blue scarfs. Some of the older boys graduate into wel

paying jobs and into the so-called People's Police, the Communist army which is being built up in the East. Will these young people under a totalitarian dictatorship be able to resist the propaganda being drummed into their ears?

Fortunately, there is resistance from free Berlin, and the Berlin youth are active. They have even been arrested, beat up, thrown into prisons, but they have not been intimidated, not by phony trials, not by police methods, not by jail sentences, as Heinz Westphal has indicated. There is a fine and noble spirit here. It is not typical nor is it widespread, but it is something new and fresh that has grown up here in Berlin. It is to young people like these that we Americans must stretch out our helping hand. (*Applause*)

### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Melvin Lasky.

Now we turn for further counsel to a German youth who has distinguished himself as a student of economics in the Free University of Berlin that he has been selected as an exchange student to go to Union College in Schenectady next fall. I understand he wants to go into radio or journalism here in Germany. Well, tonight, Peter Propp, we want to hear from you on this very urgent question, "How Will German Youth Influence the Future of Germany?" Peter Propp. (*Applause*)

### **Peter Propp:**

What does German youth think about all these arguments? They are impressive, but what are the realities?

There aren't enough jobs for young people or opportunities for education. The other day I saw quite a crowd in the street. About eighty people were struggling to get a chance at a single stenographer's job. At our University, we were only able to enroll nineteen hundred students out of 3,500 applicants. The general economic situation is not good, and many young persons say quite reasonably, "I don't have the time to come to the youth group. I must try to earn some money." Is it surprising, then, that young Germans are said to be apathetic toward politics? They go on to say, "Anyway, we have once been cheated. Let us keep out of it this time."

In some cases, youth takes a very abstract interest in political affairs, but when it comes to practical deeds, they are reluctant and often neglect existing opportunities.

However, we must differentiate. Those who are younger than nineteen have not felt the impact of Nazism so very much. They, therefore, are more easily influenced today. If they live in the

Soviet zone, they are really living in the shadow of Communist propaganda.

Those in their twenties are far less susceptible. They don't want to be propagandized—they want to wait and see and decide for themselves. Consequently, only hard facts and not ideologies can convince them. Political parties and other groups often employ youth merely as a means to achieve their ends. Young people resent this, for they have no voice and often are not even listened to. There is a curtain of distrust between the generations. Youth doesn't have much confidence or even respect for the old folk who, as they say, got us into this mess.

What do the young Germans think of the many organizations and groups that are trying to influence them? Some of these mentioned by Dr. Grace have done a certain amount of good already and one can only hope that they will be improved and expanded. We need fresh and new influences. The Socialists teach Marxism of a hundred years ago. The Liberals teach a Liberalism of two hundred years ago. Is it not natural that youth is skeptical today?

How does youth think about the Allied occupation of Germany? In many respects, very critically. They see a contradiction between the continued dismantling of industry and the Allied promises of a prosperous Marshall Plan Germany and a prosperous western Europe. On the other hand, they realize how much the presence and support of the Western Powers mean in the resistance to eastern totalitarianism. Especially, youth in the Eastern zone

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## THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

**ALONZO GRACE**—Formerly Commissioner of Education for the State of Connecticut, Dr. Grace is the Director of Education of the Cultural Relations Division of the Office of Military Government of the United States. During World War II, he served as director of field operations for the Pre-Induction Training branch of the U. S. Army and director of the Armed Service Education and Training Program. Prior to that, he was instructor and lecturer in the departments of education at several universities, including University of Minnesota, Yale University, University of Rochester, Aberdeen Teachers College, Columbia, Harvard, and Western Reserve.

A graduate of the University of Minnesota (A.B. and A.M.), Western Reserve (Ph.D.), and Boston University (Sc.D.), Dr. Grace is the author of two books: *State Aid and School Costs* and *Tomorrow's Citizens*.

**MELVIN LASKY**—Mr. Lasky is an American editor of *Der Monat*, a German language magazine published in Berlin and distributed in other Western European countries. A native New Yorker and a graduate of City College (A.B., 1920), his journalistic career started with the New York weekly, *New Leader*. During World War II, Mr. Lasky served with the Armed Forces overseas. After the war, he remained in Europe as foreign correspondent.

**WALDEMAR VON KNOERINGEN**—member of the Bavarian Parliament. Mr. von Knoeringen is chairman of the Socialist Democratic party in Bavaria.

**PETER D. PROPP**—Mr. Propp is a student of economics at the Free University in Berlin, and is a member of the International Student Seminars. Next year, he will attend Union College in Schenectady, New York, as an exchange student.



hope that the West will not forget them and will support their struggle for democratic liberties.

Are we young Germans nationalistic? Will we succumb to the propaganda Mr. Lasky has mentioned? I don't think so. Many have already had a chance to exchange ideas, to meet other peoples, and to see other countries. They have learned how tragically false the Nazi prejudices were.

This feeling about the past is expanding. German youth is opening its eyes, becoming more world minded. Give us a chance to educate ourselves, to earn a living, and to see the practice of the theories you are preaching. Then, we will be with you. The vacuum which we had to face in 1945 has not yet been filled entirely. Only a few of the young generation have gone beyond dissatisfaction with the past.

It will be the realities of this present period that will give young Germans an idea of what kind of future they really want. Words alone will not do it. Results and only results will convince the hesitating millions that Western democracy is the right way of life. Active participation will come only when the goal does not seem to be an abstract and remote one.

I think that we can create this active interest if we agree on certain purposes—a prosperous economy, a rising standard of living, a Germany that is united and not split and incorporated into Western Europe. This will give the youth of Germany hope for the future. (*Applause*)

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Peter Propp, and each of you speakers for giving us the benefit of these brief glances behind the Iron Curtain. Now, before we take the questions from this representative Berlin audience, we have a special message for our listeners.

#### **Mrs. Buck:**

This is Mrs. J. L. Blair Buck, President of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. I am very glad to be here in Berlin and to learn firsthand something of the many problems that exist here today.

Like every other woman in the world, I am deeply interested in our discussion this evening. The women of America feel a great responsibility for youth all over the world. I am sure that many of the members of our women's clubs will find it useful and profitable to organize informal discussion groups to listen to these Round-the-World Town Meetings which will come to you each week at this hour.

As never before, we in America need to develop a world-wide point of view as we consider the common problems of humanity.

**Announcer:**

Thank you, Mrs. Buck. With the interest you, our Town Meeting listeners, have shown in our tour by writing directly to your local radio station or to Town Hall, we are sure that you will want to read the transcript of each broadcast. For your convenience and so that you will have a complete record from the twelve world capitals, we are binding together in a book the twelve Town Meeting Bulletins covering these broadcasts. You can get your set of twelve by sending in one dollar to Town Hall, New York 18, New York. These will be shipped to you shortly after the Tokyo Town Meeting on September 27.

And now, for the question period, we return you to Mr. Denny.

# QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

*Mr. Denny:* We are ready now for our Question Period here in the Cecilia Auditorium in Berlin. Some of the questions will come from a German but will be translated immediately into English. We will start with the question from the gentleman over here. Yes, sir.

*Man:* I would like to ask Mr. Lasky whether he doesn't believe that the American soldiers should be taught that the German youth can really participate in the democratic work and that we should not be only considered as the members of a vanquished nation. Very often it happens that American soldiers when they meet us call us "Krauts" or whatever it may be. This is a very bad example which is bound to bring about a deadlock between the German population and the American Occupation Army.

*Mr. Lasky:* I was a soldier, a GI in the American Army for a number of years, and I know that within the Army there is also a systematic attempt of the older people, the older officers, to teach the young recruits and the young soldiers and give them something of a political education about Europe. The only thing I would caution you against is taking little details, little names, and blowing them up into something significant. The Americans, I think, have reached the point where when they are referred to as "amis" by the Germans don't really feel particularly offended. I think that the Germans should get over that sensitivity, too. (Applause)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Now for a question from the gentleman in the front row.

*Man:* I have a question for Dr. Grace. I'm a former GI who worked in German youth activities. I'd like to know why in heaven's name German youth activities, now under the Army, are not turned over to an American or German civilian organization, as the Army does not seem to have the personnel.

*Dr. Grace:* I suggest that since you have been in the Army and know army regulations that question be answered through channels. (Laughter)

I would like to make this observation. In the military government our policy is to aid German youth to aid themselves. The Armed Forces program is an operative program largely on the welfare and leadership basis. It is under the direct supervision of the Army.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Dr. Grace. Now for a question from the gentleman on this other side of the hall.

*Man:* I have a question for Herr von Knoeringen. You spoke at length about the leading of German youth. I imagine you meant



by the political parties. I'm afraid I don't know what party you represent, but I'd like to know if your party, as one of the established parties in Germany, is ready to start taking some leadership from German youth, particularly those of university age and just out of university, instead of trying to lead them? (*Applause*)

*Mr. Denny:* I think the gentleman means by German youth, do you not? Leadership by German youth? All right, Mr. von Knoeringen.

*Mr. von Knoeringen:* I think I have been somewhat misunderstood. I did not say that I think that the German parties should lead the German youth. My point was that the German parties not just the German parties but the older generation, should produce an example to convince the German youth. That was my point. There is no doubt that when you go today to political parties they are all prepared to take young people in. But our people are reluctant. They hesitate to join political parties because they know what one political party once was. And therefore they say, "Go away with politics." But we feel that it is necessary, you see, to convince the young people of the importance of politics in general. And at the moment, it is quite a problem for us to get them active in political, responsible work. (*Applause*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Now the question from the captain here.

*Man:* I have a question for Mr. Propp. Do you believe that the German youth will come through the hard times which they are now facing and must continue to face and emerge therefrom with a conviction that they themselves can solve their problems, or will they return to the myth that some leader can solve the problems better for them?

*Mr. Propp:* There certainly is quite a danger that German youth will follow another leader. But I think that if it's possible to keep the democratic forces alive, and prove to them that democracy is efficient and can work out their problems, then I don't think you will have to fear that this will not work.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The young lady over here, please.

*Lady:* I wish to ask Mr. von Knoeringen if he ever tried to give the youth a real participation in government.

*Mr. von Knoeringen:* I can speak from experience. We have at the moment to name the candidates for the New and Free Parliament after Hitler in Western Germany. And I can tell you how difficult it is to find young candidates. It is, first of all, that they are not in the party. So you say, "Try to do something to get them in." Yes, but if you do try to get them in, you will get them into very nice discussions, very serious, very realistic discussions but when it comes to active political work, then they are re-

stant again. So I must say quite openly to our youth—"It depends on you, too, to take your chances and to work your way into the political parties."

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. We'll have the question from the gentleman back in the center of the hall.

*Man:* Mr. Lasky, you have said that the Germans must try again to have the feeling and the conviction that they are part of a sound national organism. The question is, can the German youths have that feeling if they feel themselves daily surrounded by occupation troops?

*Mr. Lasky:* Well, I think that the main problem is, will youth understand the purposes of the occupation, why those troops are there, and what those purposes are? If they are surrounded by Soviet occupation troops, I think they understand pretty much what the purposes are. If somebody in Munich sees the American troops there and doesn't quite understand that they are there in Munich so that Berlin can remain a free city—that is the main theme tonight—can we teach these young people not to submit to black prejudices which they observe on the streets, but to read, ask questions, to thoughtfully probe what the dilemma is that they are facing? When they do that, they will not come to quick, emotional reactions, but will become intelligent and political. (applause)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Lasky. We have a question from a lady over here.

*Lady:* I would like to know from Mr. von Knoeringen whether he thinks that in order to participate in public life it is absolutely necessary to be part of a party, and to be behind a party—whether or not it is not possible that certain men, statesmen, or men in political life can work in the political life of our nation without being a member of a certain party. This is, perhaps, the most important and cogent question of all.

*Mr. von Knoeringen:* To take part in public life, it is not necessary to be a member of a party. You can take part in all kinds of organizations to help to create a new society, but political policy—policy of the parties—will form, so to speak, the policy of the state, the policy for all of us. And to do this you have to work with other forces. You have to make yourself understood with other friends. You have to work for some aim. So you try to find yourself to find a friend, a group, where you can join. If you are alone in policy, you will go a certain way. If you are big enough, brave enough, outstanding enough in your nation, you may stay alone and they will listen to you. But if you are just a little worker in the political field, then it is better for you to join those groups

that are nearest to your ideas, and by doing so, strengthen the force to bring about the political aims you are after.

*Man:* I want to ask a question of Mr. Propp. Mr. Propp, do you think that there is a danger for part of the German youth to misinterpret the word democracy? That they think they are acting democracy, but are still running along totalitarian lines? What I mean to say is, do you think they are talking democracy and at the same time not acting it?

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Propp.

*Mr. Propp:* I don't think you can expect the youth to begin democratic life on the ninth of May, 1945, when they have lived under a dictatorship until the eighth of May, 1945, but they will gradually and will gradually be educated to really live democratically and not only say they are democrats. And I think they have made some very good progress in learning how to live democratically.

*Man:* I would like to ask a question of Dr. Grace. Why is it not possible to work in the G. Y. A. Clubs without any orders from higher-ups? The German youth don't want any more orders. Why should we not be allowed to run our own affairs as we like?

*Dr. Grace:* I'm quite sure that most of the G. Y. A. Clubs are run in a democratic fashion. My advice is again that because you may have had an unfortunate experience you not generalize the entire program on the basis of that experience, and I suggest that you consult the leader in charge, voicing your criticism to him, and he will be perfectly willing, as a true democrat, to receive your criticism.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Dr. Grace. Now, a question from the Director of our Seminar, Mr. Williams. I hope it's twenty-five words, Chester.

*Mr. Williams:* I'm directing my question to Mr. von Knoering. If the German youth are not willing to take a chance in democratic organizations now, as the people in Berlin are taking chances, how do you expect democrats in France and Holland and America to take chances on giving freedom to the Germans?

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. von Knoeringen.

*Mr. von Knoeringen:* I want to answer that it is the great problem of the political parties nowadays in Germany—of the democratic-minded political parties—to get our youth to take an active part in political life. We have certain forces. We have a certain strength, but we may not have succeeded with this strength now. But you may feel sure that the democratic forces of Germany try day and night to convince our youth to take an active part.

And now for the second part of the question. I well understand



course, that the people outside Germany—the people of the eastern world—are reluctant to trust the German people if the German youth is not prepared to take part in this active political life. Therefore, we—I feel it is our responsibility—may take this as the basis to convince our youth finally to make a decision on the side of democracy.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Now the question from the lady over on the other side for Dr. Grace.

*Lady:* We have been asked whether the German youth should take the responsibility of conducting their own affairs in their own youth organizations. The question, now, is this: How are we going to find the necessary financial means to do that? Could the means not come from the United States without such help involving any pressure from political sides?

*Dr. Grace:* I should like to make this comment, that there is money where people want to spend money. And today there was held in Stuttgart a football game—a championship football game—that attracted 90,000 people—tickets selling for as high as 300 marks. I think in Germany, like in the rest of the world, we must wake up our minds as to the choices we will make. I agree that there must be help, but self-help is still a self-responsibility, and the first help must begin at home. (*Applause*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Grace. Now we have a question from one of the young men that we were heckling a little while ago. Guenther has a question for Mr. Lasky.

*Guenther:* Mr. Lasky, I would ask you a question, you being an American. The German youth have been reproached for not having protested against concentration camps under the Hitler regime. Today there are still concentration camps, and I'm perfectly certain that the Americans are perfectly aware that those concentration camps still exist. Now a petition has been sent to the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Paris. The Americans were at that meeting. However, our protest has been completely ignored. I should like to know why.

*Mr. Lasky:* First, I would tell our friend that not all programs that are put into action are openly discussed over conference tables, particularly when a man like Mr. Vishinsky is around. On the second point, I would make it quite clear that the Americans, and some Americans, just like there are always some Germans—and I warn, I think, for the fourth time this evening, that we couldn't speak of all Americans and all Germans—a great many Americans have called attention to the concentration camp and, I may say, have contributed something to the campaign of enlightenment about it. I remember in 1947, before the German

newspapers could say everything they wanted to say, I was one of the first who, under my own by-line, was able to write an article about the conditions in the Eastern Zone.

I think, however, that this is once again a joint problem of the enlightened Germans—small though they may be but active they are—and Americans and the other peoples of the world.

There are many Americans, I quite confess, who don't know the true conditions over here, but I, who have lived a considerable amount of time both in Hesse and in Bavaria and Württemberg-Baden, can also tell you that there are a great many Germans who don't know the conditions over here and are not willing even to listen to an American coming back to Munich or to Bavaria or to Stuttgart and tell them what's going on in Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen. Once again the basis has to be an international one, and we have to guard at every point against national formulas full of emotional prejudices. (*Applause*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Lasky. Nevertheless, Mr. Lasky, we must remember that the young man who asked the question spent two and a half years in a concentration camp in Buchenwald and was thrown out by the Russians only after they found him unfit for further labor because he had tuberculosis. (*Applause.*)

Now, while our speakers prepare their summaries of tonight's discussion, here's a special message of interest to you.

*Mr. Kvam:* This is Roger Kvam again, reporting on the activities of our Town Hall World Seminar in Berlin. Our first meeting here was a briefing by General Frank Howley, United States Commandant in Berlin, on the over-all situation and its related problems. The General was frank and forthright in his statements and answers to our questions. Since then, we have been hard at work with our seminars on problems confronting the German people.

In all of these discussions, many leading German figures in labor, education, agriculture, and other fields sat side by side with our own representatives in those fields. The coöperation and the viewpoints expressed provide an extraordinary basis for understanding which we have not had heretofore. Everywhere we go, Germans of all ages are apprehensive about their position between the opposing forces of East and West. We haven't been here long enough to draw conclusions, but we are looking forward to our next stop in Vienna behind the Iron Curtain.

Now for the summaries of tonight's discussion, we return to Mr. Denny.

*Mr. Denny:* In order to give you more time for our questions tonight, we're not having our summaries. However, I want

Thank Dr. Alonzo Grace, Waldemar von Knoeringen, Melvin  
sky, Peter Propp, and these four young people, Heinz Westphal,  
Herrin Mattenklott, Herr Kruss, and Guenther for their splendid  
contributions to this discussion.

We also want to thank our auspices, the Free University of  
Berlin and the German Institute for Political Science, the dis-  
tinguished *Bürgermeister* of Berlin, Dr. Ernst Reuter, Colonel  
Storck, and the entire staff of the Information Services Division  
for their invaluable aid in arranging this meeting and our Town  
Hall Seminars.

Now, copies of tonight's discussion may be obtained in the usual  
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Next week, our program will originate in Vienna, where our  
subject will be, "Can Austria Survive as an Independent Demo-  
cratic Nation?" The speakers will be Dr. Karl Gruber, Foreign  
Minister and Leader of the Conservatives; Dr. Oscar Pollak, Editor  
of the *Wiener Arbeiterzeitung* and member of the Socialist Party  
Executive; Irving Brown, International Representative of the  
American Federation of Labor; and General Jesmond D. Balmer,  
Deputy High Commissioner of the U. S. Forces in Austria and  
Military Adviser to the U. S. Delegation to the Council of Foreign  
Ministers for the work on the treaty with Austria.

We hope you'll plan to be with us next week and each week  
at the sound of the Crier's bell.





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